

I. Rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner asserts that the language of claim 1 is indefinite since the language “for enhancing a coefficient of friction” is not clear. In particular, the Examiner states “it is unclear where it is enhanced, between which elements and who (by which structural feature?).”

Applicant respectfully submits that the language of claim 1 is not indefinite. Claim 1 recites “wherein a sheet member for enhancing a coefficient of friction is interposed at least between said magnetic tape and said tape clamp portion.” Consequently, the *sheet member* is located *between a magnetic tape and a tape clamp portion* and the sheet member enhances a coefficient of friction. See specification for example, at page 18, first and second full paragraph. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 1, under § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

II. Rejection of claims 1 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shiga et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,663,035). Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiga.

However, Shiga can be removed as a reference by perfecting the claim to foreign priority based on Applicant’s priority document JP 11/38663. The filing date of Shiga (April 5, 2001) is after the filing date (February 17, 1999) of the foreign priority document. In addition, it appears that Shiga’s priority document, JP 2000-103259, was likely published on or around October 5,

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Appln. No.: 10/633,703

Attorney Docket No.: Q76737


2001 which is also after the application's foreign priority date of February 17, 1999. Further, the priority document provides support, under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for each of the rejected claims.

A verified English translation of JP 11/38663 is submitted herewith. Consequently, the rejection of claims 1, 7 and 8 should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: January 13, 2005